

Liaison

Library Association News-Sheet

News Editors: R. G. Surridge and D. R. Jamieson

June 1959

L.A.'s 'STRONG EXCEPTION' TO ROTHERHAM ACTION

UNDER the terms of its Royal Charter, the first purpose of the Library Association is to unite all persons engaged or interested in library work, and in pursuance of this aim, it has been a long tradition that membership of the Association is open to Institutions as well as to professional librarians and library assistants. This has given rise on occasions to difficulties and apparent clash of interests, such as have arisen in the publication of the Roberts Report. As a result, proposals have been advanced by certain local authorities for a change in the methods of representation of Institutional interests in the L.A. Council.

The County Borough of Rotherham has submitted to all Local Authorities suggestions for a change in the Byelaws, under which Institutional representatives would be elected by the votes of Institutional members only, instead of being nominated, as at present, by certain Local Authority Associations on the invitation of the Council. The Rotherham proposals were brought to the notice of the L.A. Council, who did not, at this stage, discuss their merits, and it seems doubtful if the proposals will commend themselves to a majority of Local Authority representatives.

The Council, however, took strong exception to the terms of the letter sent by the Town Clerk of Rotherham to his colleagues in Boroughs and Counties throughout the country, in which it is suggested that they should secure the support of members of their library staffs and seek to obtain their signatures on the notices of motion for the Rotherham proposals. The Secretary was instructed to write to the Town Clerk of Rotherham protesting against this suggestion which might be construed, however mistakenly, as a form of coercion.

It was also reported that an informal meeting had taken place between the Honorary officers of the L.A. and representatives of non-county boroughs to discuss possible ways of improving the representation of Local Authority interests on the Council and of providing some effective means of expressing a Local Authority viewpoint on matters affecting the powers or areas of Local Authorities. The Council appointed a sub-committee to give further consideration to this matter.

New Approach on Grading

Discussions are now taking place between Nalgo and the L.A. on the reopening of negotiations for a new grading decision for Public Library Staff. A meeting was held on the 29th May for a preliminary discussion. The L.A. representatives were: Miss F. E. Cook and Messrs. T. E. Callander, E. A. Hinton, J. H. Jones, F. C. Tighe and Mr. D. Haslam, Membership Officer of the L.A. No reports of this meeting are or will be available, but it is known that negotiations were initiated on the basis that all posts requiring the holder to be a chartered librarian should be graded not less than Grade II.

Trade Union for Chartered Librarians ?

The desirability of forming a Trade Union was discussed by the Executive Committee which had before it a memorandum from the Secretary. Mr. Barry also reported that he was in touch with other professional associations on this problem and would submit a report later.

Owing to the printing dispute many items have had to be omitted from this issue. It is hoped it will be possible to include them in the next *Liaison*.

A Lead in Microrecording?

The advances that are being made in the techniques of microrecording have produced an urgent need for the creation of some central, co-ordinating body in the field, which could at the same time give advice to the many libraries and other organizations throughout the country among whom the use of micro-reproductions is spreading rapidly.

It has been agreed that the L.A. shall work for the formation as soon as possible of a **National Advisory Council on Microrecording**. Its objects will be to promote the use of microreaders, to assist research in microrecording and related fields, to co-ordinate the efforts of all interested societies and institutions in the U.K., and to be in a position to offer disinterested advice on all aspects of the use of micro-reproductions. Organizations with somewhat similar objects already exist in the U.S.A. and in Europe, where the Microfiche Foundation of the Netherlands is a notable instance. In the nature of things a representative body such as this National Advisory Council is envisaged will not appear overnight. Meanwhile the L.A. has decided upon two steps in that direction.

A research student will be appointed to carry out a study of what is being done in universities, colleges and other libraries where microrecording by its various methods is being carried out to any appreciable extent. This investigation should produce a directory of the facilities at present available, together with comparative evidence of the operating experience and the capital and running costs of each type of equipment. An application for funds to support this study is to be made to one of the grant-making bodies. The second step, which initially can only be in the nature of a recommendation, would be the holding in Chaucer House of a number of cameras and readers on loan from their manufacturers. These would be available for inspection by librarians and others, and members of the staff of the L.A. Library would be trained to demonstrate these machines. (It was reported that a microfiche camera has been donated by Dr. van der Wolk, of the Netherlands Microfiche Foundation, to the library of the London University Institute of Education; which is currently engaged in negotiating its entry into the country.)

Dulles Papers for New Library

A John Foster Dulles library of diplomatic history is to be founded at his old university, Princeton. It will contain personal papers of the late Secretary of State, and a collection of microfilms of official State Department documents relating to Mr. Dulles's service in the department. Access to these papers will be controlled by persons appointed by Mr. Dulles, and many of them will apparently still be confidential, which suggests that scholars may require security clearance before they can use them.

A new wing will be built on the existing library of Princeton University to house the collection, with funds provided by a group of Mr. Dulles's friends, and this will also house collections of the papers of other American statesmen.

Still on the Secret List

Recommendations for a completely new scheme of L.A. examinations are necessarily veiled in a cloak of secrecy. It can be said, however, that a draft has been completed and that plans have been made for a meeting to take place on July 14th—resuming on the next day, if need be—at which the merits of the draft Syllabus will be thoroughly examined.

"Pilot Project"

The sub-committee on Professional and Non-professional Duties is examining the desirability and practicability of dividing library work in the U.K. into professional and non-professional categories. The committee has agreed that many advantages may accrue from such a division, including:

- (1) Better recruitment and retention of staff;
- (2) More effective use of professionally qualified staff;
- (3) More efficient and economical management of libraries;
- (4) Better understanding of professional work by employing authorities and other laymen concerned with library development.

Two schedules of a "pilot project" are to be prepared: one for Lending library work and one for Reference library work, based generally on the method used in the American Library Association's *Descriptive List of Professional and Non-professional Duties in Libraries*, 1948. Mr. T. E. Callander is preparing the draft for Lending library work and Mr. F. C. Tighe for Reference library work. These drafts will be presented to the sub-committee at its next meeting on the 15th June.

NORTH-WEST POLYTECHNIC LIBRARIANSHIP STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Old students who contributed to the presentation to Mr. Bengt may like to know that a farewell party will be held in a room above the "Grafton Arms", Prince of Wales Road, N.W.5, on Wednesday, July 1st, at 6.30 p.m. All past and present students will be welcome, and any hoping to attend are requested to inform the Hon. Sec. if possible.

THE NEW LOOK

Appointments to be made by the L.A.

CONSIDERABLE changes in the administration of Chaucer House are foreshadowed as a result of three important recommendations made by the Sub-Committee on the Future Organization of the Office. These were accepted by the Executive Committee and confirmed by full Council.

The appointments to be made are:

Public Relations Officer (Part-time)

This appointment is to be advertised at a salary of between £500 and £750 per annum. It is to be for a period of one year, after which a decision to renew it will be taken in the light of the first year's results. The decision on such an appointment came as a result of a resolution from the A.A.L. but members will know that such a post has been urged by various sections of the profession for some years.

With the agreement of the L.A. Secretary we are able to print extracts from a memorandum prepared by him for the Executive Committee, as this will give a background to a new venture which we believe to be of general interest. Mr. Barry first dealt with the scope of an active Public Relations Policy and analysed five principal aspects in relation to our profession:

"(i) **The supply of news items to the press, etc.** Because of the nature of the Association's business we cannot expect a steady flow to the press of news items which are of real public interest. At the same time, I suggest that there is room for a greater effort in this department and that any items which have news value should be regularly passed to the press. In particular, after the issue of the *Record* and *Liaison* each month extracts can be written up in a form suitable for press publication and sent to the news agencies and the principal papers (with or without copies of the publications).

"(ii) **Articles for the press.** It is suggested that there is a market for articles of an informative kind explaining the services which libraries and librarians can provide. The national dailies have little space for articles of such a type but they appear often in periodicals. It is suggested that we should make contact with editors and agencies with a view to placing articles or series of articles prepared by the Association. There may be scope for similar action with the local press.

"(iii) **Conferences.** Greater publicity can be sought for proceedings at annual Conferences. This would entail approaches to the national and local papers and to the broadcasting and television authorities, and the organization of press conferences.

"(iv) **Broadcasting and Television.** A certain amount of publicity is already given to library matters in this field, but this mostly comes unsought by the Association. It might be possible by frequent contact with the B.B.C. and Television Companies to increase the time devoted to library matters.

"(v) **Letters to the press.** These are mostly of value when it is necessary to answer criticism or to give the views of the Association in matters of controversy or public interest."

In discussing how these projects could be effected, Mr. Barry comments on the need for a P.R.O.:

"If we wish to develop the first four of these methods to the full it is suggested we can best do it by the employment of professional help. This is a realm in which the best results are achieved by persons with experience in journalism and public relations who have already contacts with the press, the B.B.C. and Television.

The fifth activity—letters to the press—is one which I suggest should remain in the hands of the Secretariat. It calls for a very full knowledge of the day-to-day aspects of Association policy."

Mr. Barry concludes by stating that it would be difficult to justify the employment of a full-time P.R.O. for the relatively limited activities outlined above.

Deputy Secretary

This new appointment is to take effect upon the departure of Mr. Henrik Jones. Mr. D. Haslam (Membership Officer) is to fill this post, the salary being on a scale two-thirds of that of the Secretary, with two-thirds of the increments. Mr. Haslam will still continue with his work as Membership Officer.

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PARTIES TACKLE ROBERTS REPORT

Approaches have already been made to the Education Committees of the two main Parliamentary parties asking them to receive deputations from the L.A. The Conservative Education Committee met our representatives on the 10th June; they were Messrs. Gardner, Paton and the Secretary.

The Labour Education Committee is willing to receive our representatives on June 24th. The Liberal Parliamentary Party is also being asked to receive a deputation.

SWEDISH LIBRARIES TOUR

The Swedish Library Association and the Swedish Institute invite British librarians on a study tour in Sweden from August 22nd to September 6th, 1959.

The tour consists of visits to a number of Sweden's most modern public libraries and also includes trips to some of the country's most beautiful districts, such as the Stockholm environs and the Jämtland mountains. Four free days are reserved at the end of the tour for a visit to a mountain hotel in Storlien. There will, of course, be opportunities for meeting Swedish colleagues.

The itinerary is as follows: London (Copenhagen), Malmö, Lund, Norrköping, Stockholm, Västerås, Östersund, Storlien, Malmö, (Copenhagen), London. The journey London-Copenhagen return will be made by night plane.

The cost is 650 Swedish Crowns (£45), which includes both travel and accommodation.

The number of participants is limited to 15. Applications should be sent by July 10th at the latest to **The Swedish Institute, 49 Egerton Crescent, London, S.W.3**, and name, address, library and position held should be stated.

THE NEW LOOK (continued from page 51)

Librarian and Research Officer

This post will be advertised at Grade "A" in the *Record* and the *Times Literary Supplement* as soon as possible. It is intended that this officer shall be freer to undertake research projects than the present Librarian, Mr. D. C. Henrik Jones, who has had a more general responsibility of advising and working upon matters outside the range of his own department.

It is intended that the Secretary shall take over certain of the Librarian's present duties as Information Officer; this applies particularly to matters of general policy and law.

DISQUIET OVER L.L.U. STAFFING

In the staffing of the Lending Library Unit it is strongly urged that the professional staff, from the Director downwards, should be Chartered Librarians;

Should an advisory council for the Library be established, it is urged that the Library Association should have adequate representation upon it.

These recommendations formed part of a memorandum on the D.S.I.R.'s Lending Library Unit, which was sent by the L.A. to all the interested bodies 18 months ago, and set out in full in the *Record* of December, 1957.

At a meeting on May 6th the L.A.'s Committee on the National Lending Library for Science and Technology was obliged to draw attention to the fact that in the planning for the L.L.U. there was little evidence that any regard was being paid to the L.A.'s memorandum of 1957; particularly the points relating to the inclusion of Chartered Librarians and the establishment of an advisory council.

Protests had been sent to the Committee by the London and Home Counties Branch and the Reference, Special and Information Section, against remarks made publicly by Dr. D. J. Urquhart, senior officer of the L.L.U., in which he has opposed the idea of Chartered Librarians in libraries which are serving a scientific field. While in one sense this is another aspect of the scientific information officer/librarian controversy, the fact that a bias is being shown at this stage in the L.L.U. plans has given the L.A.'s Executive Committee cause for concern, since the staffs of other Government libraries, including scientific libraries, include an appropriate proportion of Chartered Librarians.

A request has been made to the Secretary of D.S.I.R. to receive a deputation from the L.A. to discuss these matters, and copies of the request have been sent to the Lord President of the Council, and to the Scientific Library Committee of the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy. **The Secretary of D.S.I.R. has agreed to receive the deputation at a date to be arranged.**

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PARLIAMENTARY PARTIES QUIZ L.A. ON ROBERTS REPORT

During June representatives of the Association, namely Messrs. Gardner, Paton, Hutchings and the Secretary, were received by Committees of the Parliamentary Conservative, Labour and Liberal Parties at the House of Commons. On each occasion Mr. Gardner, who led the deputation, opened by explaining the problems which led to the appointment of the Roberts Committee. That Committee's Report, he said, represented a compromise between the differing views which had been put before it, and it was important that nothing should be done to interfere with the pattern of reform laid down by the Committee in order to placate authorities which were too small to provide an efficient library service by modern standards.

At each of the three meetings, the Association's representatives then underwent intensive questioning by Members of Parliament, who were clearly well-informed of the Roberts Committee's proposals and of the smaller authorities' opposition to them. The following are examples of questions which were put.

They asked—

Why should some smaller authorities lose their powers to counties whose standards of efficiency were even lower?

Were not the smaller authorities being sacrificed to bolster up the county service?

Where were the smaller authorities to find the money for increased expenditure on books?

What evidence was there that the public were dissatisfied with the existing library service?

How could one justify Ministry direction in a service financed wholly from rates?

Was not the suggestion that the Government should lay down a minimum figure for expenditure by local authorities at variance with the principle of the new block grant which left authorities to spend their money as they thought fit?

and from one Member—

Should there not be a charge made to borrowers of fiction?

These questions, and many more, were fully dealt with by the Association's representatives, and they were satisfied that in these three meetings they had explained and justified the Association's views to most of the Members of Parliament who are likely to shape the policy of Parliament on public libraries during the next few years.

Mr. T. Rowland Powell, M.A., who has been a member of the L.A.'s secretariat since 1929, and Editor of the *Subject Index to Periodicals* since its inception in 1931, is retiring shortly. Warm tributes to his services to the Association over these 30 years were paid to him at the last meeting of the Council. Mr. Powell's successor as Editor of the *Subject Index* is **Mr. P. Ferriday, B.A.**, formerly the Deputy Editor.

Mr. A. H. Holloway, at present head of the Ministry of Supply Technical Information and Library Services (T.I.L.), will succeed Mr. H. L.R. Hinkley as Librarian of the Admiralty Centre for Scientific Information and Liaison (ACSIL). Mr. Holloway is well known in Aslib circles.

Robert G. Vosper, director of libraries in the University of Kansas, U.S.A., has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to enable him to study "historical trends in the growth and development of book collections in British university libraries".

Mr. James Laver, the well-known authority on the history of costume, is to retire in August from his post of Keeper of the Departments of Paintings, Engravings, and Illustrations and Design, at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

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